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14. ABSTRACT The United States projects its immense national power primarily via diplomatic, informational, military, and economic means--the tools used to implement strategic policy. The national interagency process is the vehicle by which these four tools or dimensions are coordinated to meet the President's National Security Strategy. When this interagency process fails, and governmental organizations fail to harmonize national power, unity of effort is lost, and an incongruent, one-dimensional strategy results. This paper examines the interagency process at the national level. For background, it will examine the origin and evolution of the NSC, focusing on the Clinton and Bush administrations and the current problems in Iraq. Following a review of today's NSC landscape and its challenges, this study will examine several proposed solutions. Policymakers, pundits, independent organizations, and Congress have commented on and proposed solutions to the issue--new legislation, better executive direction, and specific agency policies are among those discussed. In the end, it will be clear that change is necessary, and a viable way ahead that focuses on the strategic planning process is offered.					
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**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, RI**

**National Interagency Coordination:
How the U.S. Can Better Synchronize National Power**

By

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A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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14 February 2005

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Abstract

The United States projects its immense national power primarily via diplomatic, informational, military, and economic means--the tools used to implement strategic policy. The national interagency process is the vehicle by which these four tools or dimensions are coordinated to meet the President's National Security Strategy. When this interagency process fails, and governmental organizations fail to harmonize national power, unity of effort is lost, and an incongruent, one-dimensional strategy results.

This paper examines the interagency process at the national level. For background, it will examine the origin and evolution of the NSC, focusing on the Clinton and Bush administrations and the current problems in Iraq. Following a review of today's NSC landscape and its challenges, this study will examine several proposed solutions. Policymakers, pundits, independent organizations, and Congress have commented on and proposed solutions to the issue--new legislation, better executive direction, and specific agency policies are among those discussed. In the end, it will be clear that change is necessary, and a viable way ahead that focuses on the strategic planning process is offered.

. . . Once the president decides to do something, our government goes back into its stovepipes for execution; Department of State does what they do, Department of Defense does what we do, Treasury does what they do, et cetera.

-- General Peter Pace, Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

INTRODUCTION

The United States projects its immense national power primarily via diplomatic, informational, military, and economic means--the tools used to implement strategic policy. The national interagency process is the vehicle by which these four tools or dimensions are coordinated to meet the President's National Security Strategy. When this interagency process fails, and governmental organizations fail to harmonize national power, unity of effort is lost, and an incongruent, one-dimensional strategy results. At the national level, the hub of this interagency process is the National Security Council (NSC). A properly organized and directed NSC is essential to an effective interagency solution to national security.

This paper will examine the interagency process at the national level. For background, it will examine the origin and evolution of the NSC, focusing on the Clinton and Bush administrations and the current problems in Iraq. Following a review of today's NSC landscape and its challenges, this study will examine several proposals. Policymakers, pundits, independent organizations, and Congress have commented on and proposed solutions to the issue--new legislation, better executive direction, and specific agency policies are among those discussed. In the end, it will be clear that change is necessary, and a viable way ahead that focuses on strategic planning is offered. It is important to note that various governmental organizations have developed and implemented their own initiatives

that address interagency planning and operations. These solutions, albeit important, are often simply by-products of national-level failures and are not addressed in this paper.

The United States invests tremendous resources to implement its national security policy. It is inexcusable for this blood and treasure to rest on a foundation of disjointed, incoherent national government coordination.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS

The National Security Council is the President's principle organization for coordinating national security policy among the various government agencies, but it is not a decision-making body. The members of the various NSC committees hold official government positions, but when meeting as an NSC committee at any level, they function as advisors to the President.¹ This is similar to the military service chiefs who, when functioning as the Joint Chiefs of Staff, are acting as an advisory body, not as leaders of their respective services.

The NSC staff resides in the Executive Office of the President within the White House organization and works directly for the President, through the National Security Advisor. The staff is structured to synchronize the executive agencies; therefore, it is imbedded within the White House organization to ensure physical and political proximity to the President.² This structure purposely attempts to insulate the NSC staff from any agency bureaucracy.

¹ U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, *Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change, Volume 1, Key Observations and Overarching Processes* (Washington, DC: 15 April 2001), 2.

² *Ibid.*, 5.

It is important to understand the historical evolution of the NSC before analyzing its more recent struggles. The National Security Act of 1947 established the National Security Council, placing it immediately under the President. The NSC initially consisted of the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the three service secretaries, the chairman of the National Security Resources Board, and any other officials that the President chose to add.³ The Act also established a permanent staff to support the day-to-day NSC functions. The original role of the NSC was a completely advisory body to help the President integrate national security policy.⁴

Section 402, of the National Security Act of 1947 specifically states the interagency duties of the NSC:

. . . To advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies related to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security.
*. . . For the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the departments and agencies of the Government. . .*⁵ (Italics added)

Each President has personalized his NSC. Shortly after Congress passed the National Security Act, President Truman further organized and strengthened the new NSC by growing the interdepartmental staff. President Eisenhower added the position of Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (commonly known as the National Security Advisor) and established an interdepartmental planning board. President Kennedy's personal involvement in foreign policy further strengthened the National Security Advisor position by

³ Subject to advice and consent of the Senate; Stephen A. Cambone, *A New Word Structure for National Security Planning* (Washington: The CSIS Press 1998), 230.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 146-147.

⁵ National Security Act, *U.S. Code, Title 50*, sec. 402 (1947) <<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com>> [3 February 2005].

empowering him to lead the White House situation room. Kennedy believed that day-to-day matters were more relevant than planning matters, which led to the NSC's direct involvement in operations. President Johnson, on the other hand, was less personally involved in foreign affairs and deferred to the individual departments at the expense of central coordination. President Nixon disapproved of this decentralization and directed his National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, to lead a much more centralized, White House-controlled NSC to formulate national security policy. With this centralization, Kissinger dominated every critical area of American foreign policy. Nixon also began the practice of outlining his NSC organization in an early presidential directive. While President Ford did not significantly alter Nixon's NSC structure, President Carter used his National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, as a cabinet-level official, further increasing the position's influence. President Reagan, in contrast, wanted to restore the State Department as the lead organization in foreign policy. This, along with the NSC's central role in the Iran-Contra scandal, led to more NSC restructuring. Finally, President George H.W. Bush's administration established a structure with three subgroups: the NSC Principles Committee (NSC/PC) at the secretary level, the NSC Deputies Committee (NSC/DC) at the deputy secretary level, and NSC Policy Coordinating Committees (NSC/PCC) at the assistant secretary level.⁶

This brief overview of the NSC from Truman to the senior Bush demonstrates the inconsistent roles and responsibilities assigned to the NSC from its inception. The NSC's location in the Executive Office of the President increases its interagency capability, but often subjects it to reorganization by each new administration. Unfortunately, this inconsistency, specifically regarding interagency coordination, continued under Presidents Clinton and Bush.

⁶ Ibid., 148-156.

THE CLINTON NSC

Presidential Decision Directive 2 (PDD 2) was the architectural document of the Clinton administration's NSC. It specifically stated, "The NSC shall be my principle means for coordinating Executive departments and agencies. . . ." ⁷ Further, PDD-2 directed the Deputies Committee to establish Interagency Working Groups (NSC/IWGs) to review and coordinate Presidential decisions in their specific policy areas. ⁸

Building on PDD-2, the Clinton Administration added formal interagency guidance with the release of PDD-56 in May 1997. ⁹ PDD-56, "Managing Complex Contingency Operations," was a revolutionary document generated to change how the U.S. government dealt with interagency planning and operations. After the lessons learned from Somalia were applied in Haiti, the successful new concepts were captured and institutionalized in PDD-56. ¹⁰ PDD-56's intent was to direct an interagency coordination process to achieve national unity of effort. It recognized that interagency *planning*, in particular, was fundamental to the success of an operation. ¹¹ It is important to note that PDD-56 applied only to complex contingency operations, which consisted of peacekeeping or humanitarian intervention efforts where military and civilian agencies operated simultaneously. ¹²

PDD-56 had several important components. First, it called on the Deputies Committee to form Executive Committees (ExComs) to supervise the day-to-day

⁷ White House, "Organization of the National Security Council System," Presidential Decision Directive 2 (Washington, DC: January 1993), <<http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd/pdd-2.htm>> [5 January 2005].

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ White House, "The Clinton Administration's Policy on Managing Complex Contingency Operations," Presidential Decision Directive 56 Whitepaper (Washington DC: May 1997), <<http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd56.htm>> [2 December 2004].

¹⁰ Deborah L. Reed, "Post Conflict Operations Planning and Execution," (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA: May 2004), 3.

¹¹ Gabriel Marcella, "National Security and the Interagency Process: Forward into the 21st Century," in *Organizing for National Security*, ed. Douglas T. Stuart (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, November 2000), 179-180.

¹² PDD 56 Whitepaper, 1-2.

management of U.S. participation in complex contingency operations. The Assistant Secretary-level ExCom would consist of Presidential appointees from the relevant agencies to add direct accountability. Second, PDD-56 directed the development of Political-Military (Pol-Mil) implementation plans to coordinate government actions. Pol-Mil plans were required to contain comprehensive situation assessments, mission statements, agency objectives, and desired endstates. Further, the plans were to contain concepts of operations, specific agency responsibilities, exit strategies, organizational structures (command and control), preparatory tasks, as well as the specific agency plans. Third, PDD-56 called for interagency Pol-Mil plan “rehearsals,” which, in reality, were presentations of the specific agency plans by the ExCom member representing that particular agency. By simultaneously reviewing the various agencies plans, identification of coordination problems such as inconsistent objectives and competing resource allocation took place *before* operations began. Fourth, the PDD directed after-action reviews following operations to ensure documentation of lessons learned. Finally, the directive required agencies to train a cadre of professionals to use the new interagency process. Specifically, the directive instructed the State and Defense Departments to develop and conduct an interagency training program. At the center of this training was the *Handbook for Interagency Management of Complex Contingency Operations*, originally published by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and maintained by National Defense University.¹³ The handbook describes in detail the integrated Pol-Mil planning process directed by Clinton’s PDD-56.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid., 5.

¹⁴ Ironically, the current 2003 version of the handbook contains further guidance from the current Bush administration’s National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 1, which reorganizes the National Security Council and, in effect, cancels the directives of PDD-56. The handbook retains the spirit of PDD-56 even though the directive is no longer in effect; National Defense University, *Interagency Management of Complex Crisis Operations Handbook* (Washington, DC: January 2003), <http://www.ndu.edu/ITEA/storage/518/ITEA_Handbook_2003.pdf> [20 December 2004], 3.

By the end of the Clinton administration, the interagency structure used PDD-56 for contingencies in Eastern Slavonia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Ethiopia.¹⁵ Investigations conducted by the Hart-Rudman Commission found that most government participants believed that PDD-56 was a good process and, when used properly, helped facilitate much better coordination among the key U.S. government agencies.¹⁶ The commission further observed that the process was dependent on a strong coordinator within the NSC staff.¹⁷ PDD-56 was far from a cure-all for national-level interagency coordination, but it was a solid first step.

THE BUSH NSC

A comparison of the National Security Strategies of the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations reveals some of their major philosophical differences. Clinton's 1998 introduction states: "Today's complex security environment demands that all our instruments of nation power be effectively integrated to achieve our security objectives."¹⁸ Four years later, after 9/11, Bush's strategy introduction takes a much more aggressive tone: "To defeat this threat we must make use of every tool in our arsenal—military power, better homeland defenses, law enforcement, intelligence, and vigorous efforts. . . ."¹⁹ Further, in Section 9, the 2002 National Security Strategy describes the necessary "transformation" of the various governmental institutions of national security. The military dominates the text,

¹⁵ Marcella, 180.

¹⁶ *Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change, Volume II, Executive Office of the President* (Washington, DC: 15 April 2001), 6.

¹⁷ U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, *Volume I*, 56.

¹⁸ The White House, "A National Security Strategy for a New Century," (Washington, DC: October 1998), <<http://clinton2.nara.gov/WH/EOP/NSC/html/documents/nssr.pdf>> [3 February 2005], 1.

¹⁹ The White House, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," (Washington, DC: September 2002), <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf>> [3 February 2005], introduction.

encompassing six paragraphs, while diplomacy is allotted only two, and information just one. In addition, Section 9 does not address any interaction among these elements.²⁰

To organize its NSC, the Bush administration published National Security Policy Directive (NSPD) 1 in February 2001. Even before 9/11, it was clear that the NSC would take on a very different role than it had under Clinton. The new NSC directive tasked NSC Policy Coordination Committees (NSC/PCCs) to maintain day-to-day interagency coordination. The NSPD organized the PCCs into six regions and eleven functional areas to replace all existing IWGs. NSPD-1 specifically stated that it superseded all other existing presidential directives, including PDD-56, which by then had become the primary guidance for interagency coordination.²¹

Early on, to fill the void left by the now outdated PDD-56, the Bush administration drafted a replacement directive temporarily titled NSPD-XX.²² This new document was to build on PDD-56, calling for a Contingency Planning Policy Coordination Committee (CP-PCC) at the Assistant Secretary level to lead the creation of interagency plans. These plans would focus on U.S. objectives, desired endstates, policy options, interagency responsibilities, resources, and strategies. Unfortunately, Bush never signed NSPD-XX.²³ Michele Flournoy, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense and current senior advisor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, has suggested that there was

²⁰ Ibid., 29-31.

²¹ The White House, "Organization of the National Security Council System," National Security Presidential Directive 1 (Washington, DC: February 2001) <<http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-1.htm>> [2 December 2004].

²² The document is numbered "XX" because numbers are assigned when directives are signed.

²³ Michele Flournoy, "Historical Lessons, Learned and Unlearned," Lecture Outline, SAIS Nation Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq Conference: 13 April 2004, <<http://www.sais-jhu.edu/mediastream/video/Ondemand/PDF/Outline%20of%20Flournoy%20Remarks%20on.pdf>> [20 December 2004].

initial resistance from Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, which led to delays.²⁴ Further, reported drafts of NSPD-XX lacked some key aspects of PDD-56. It did not assign accountability or direct rehearsals, and it did not contain sample Pol-Mil plans.²⁵ At present, there are no known plans for the implementation of NSPD-XX.²⁶

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

The Bush administration's lack of emphasis on the interagency process caused extensive problems during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Bob Woodward's book, *Plan of Attack*, chronicles the Bush administration's decision-making leading up to the conflict. Woodward's account details the planning process and in particular, how the Department of Defense (DoD) operated relatively alone. As Rumsfeld and Central Command's (CENTCOM's) General Tommy Franks continuously reworked the existing war plan for Iraq, little interagency planning took place. Franks acknowledged that extensive interagency work was necessary, particularly for "Phase 4" stability operations, but there is no evidence it ever happened.²⁷ Even when Phase 4 operations were discussed, it was in the context of troop strength, not interagency strategy.²⁸

Some officials, including Deputy National Security Advisor Steve Hadley, realized the need for a comprehensive postwar plan. Unfortunately, the interagency process failed again when NSPD-24 established the new Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (OHRA), created to be the post-conflict experts, within DoD. To compound

²⁴ Michele Flournoy, "NSPD-XX info for Naval War College Paper," email to Maj Daniel B. Talati, 10 January 2005.

²⁵ Reed, 7.

²⁶ Flournoy email.

²⁷ Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon and Schuster 2004), 102.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

problems, when State Department officials offered DoD their “Future of Iraq” project, an extensive study that began long before the conflict, the Pentagon reacted negatively to their non-DoD inputs.²⁹ Even if Hadley and the rest of the NSC wanted to pursue an interagency strategy in Iraq, there was no policy to guide it. Worse yet, NSC staff members discovered that coordination even *within* DoD was broken.³⁰ For example, as late as three weeks before the war, Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz engaged in a public debate over troop strength requirements in Iraq as each testified separately to Congress.³¹ Richard Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State was particularly frustrated, claiming that the NSC system was dysfunctional and that policy was not sufficiently coordinated.³² Even General Franks, in his very pro-Bush administration autobiography, admitted that the DoD and DoS did not work together properly.³³ The NSC, and in particular, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice took much of the blame for interagency failures in OIF. In October 2003, a *Washington Post* article claimed that many of the foreign policy problems resulted from interagency failures, which were Rice’s responsibility.³⁴ Rice admitted in early 2005, “We’ve made a lot of decisions in this period of time . . . some of them have been bad decisions”³⁵

Unfortunately, the Bush administration abandoned the lessons that the Clinton administration had painfully learned in Somalia. The Pentagon focused primarily on the

²⁹ Ibid., 280-284.

³⁰ Ibid., 321-322.

³¹ James Fallows, “Blind into Baghdad,” *The Atlantic Online* (January/February 2004): <<http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2004/01/fallows.htm>> [2 June 2004], 32.

³² Woodward, 414-415.

³³ Tommy Franks, *American Soldier* (New York: Harper Collins 2004), 545.

³⁴ Glenn Kessler and Peter Slevin, “Rice Fails to Repair Rifts, Officials Say: Cabinet Rivalries Complicate Her Role,” *Washington Post*, 12 October 2003. <<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/role.htm>> [10 January 2005].

³⁵ Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Condoleezza Rice Secretary of State Nomination Hearing*, 109th Cong., 1st sess., 18-19 January 2005, <<http://web.lexis-nexis.com>> [20 January 2005], 10.

major conflict portions of the war in Iraq. DoD was also solely responsible for *post*-conflict operations, which, as a result, did not get sufficient interagency planning. PDD-56 was gone, and NSPD-XX remained unsigned. There was no formal process forcing interagency solutions. There was no Pol-Mil plan because there was no requirement for one. Rice summed up the Bush administration's philosophy to Congress in January 2005, "We've always had the view that most of the interagency coordination ought to actually be done in the field."³⁶ With this logic, the interagency effort was destined to fail.

THE REACTION

Post-conflict interagency failures in Iraq quickly become a heated topic in Washington. Franks' replacement at CENTCOM, General John Abizaid, testified candidly to the Senate Armed Services Committee in March 2004: "I do think that we, as a nation, can do better in the manner in which we engage our entire interagency and planning. . . . We've got great power and we know that these operations require military, economic, diplomatic activity"³⁷

Interestingly, critiques of interagency policy did not begin with OIF. In early 2001, the Hart-Rudman Commission completed its comprehensive review on national security processes and organizations. The senior-level commission made several important observations related to the interagency process:

- The President should personally direct a top-down strategic planning process, led by the National Security Advisor.

³⁶ Ibid, 72.

³⁷ Congress, Senate, Armed Services Committee, *Hearing on the FY 2005 Central Command and European Command Budget Requests*, 108th Cong., 2d sess., 4 March 2004, <<http://web.lexis-nexis.com>> [16 December 2004], 13.

- The President should direct creation of a secure interagency national security network, analogous to DoD's SIPRNET.
- The NSC and its staff should focus on advising the President and coordinating the interagency and resist the temptation to do policymaking and operations.
- The President should form NSC interagency working groups for each major region, and a regional Under Secretary of State should chair each.³⁸

In January 2003, The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Association of the U.S. Army created the "Bi-partisan Commission on Post Conflict Reconstruction" to produce a report on what they felt the United States needed to address in a post 9/11 world. The report, *Play to Win*, included the following:

- Early development of a clear strategic plan of action that articulates U.S. interests, objectives, and strategy is critical for success.
- The lack of a signed NSPD-XX produced ad-hoc planning.
- The National Security Advisor should designate an NSC organization to be in charge of interagency strategy development and planning.³⁹

Play to Win led to House Resolution (H.R.) 2616, "Winning the Peace Act of 2003." H.R. 2616 contained the recommendations of *Play to Win*, but it never made it out of committee.⁴⁰

³⁸ *Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change, Phase III Report* (Washington, DC: 15 February 2001), 48-62.

³⁹ Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Association of the U.S. Army, *Play to Win: Final Report of the Bi-Partisan Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (Washington, DC and Arlington, VA: January 2003), <<http://www.csis.org/isp/pcr/playtowin.pdf>> [20 December 2004], 11.

⁴⁰ Congress, House, *H.R. 2616, Winning the Peace Act of 2003*, 108th Cong., 2d sess., 2003, <<http://www.theorator.com/bills108/hr2616.html>>, 1-6; <<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h108-2616>> [31 January 2005], 1.

In February 2004, Senator Richard Lugar introduced a similar bill, the “Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act of 2004.” Lugar’s bill included provisions for a new directorate of stabilization and reconstruction activities within the NSC to oversee the development of interagency contingency plans and procedures for joint civilian-military operations.⁴¹ This bill, like the previous one, stalled.

CSIS completed a particularly insightful interagency study, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era*, in March 2004. The study made the following recommendations:

- The President should designate a Deputy National Security Advisor to have lead responsibility for integrating agency strategies and plans to ensure unity of effort during execution. This official would then establish an Interagency Crisis Action Team for every stability operation being considered.
- Early in their administrations, Presidents should review the guidance and procedures for planning complex operations. This guidance, like PDD-56, would integrate planning and include a template for Pol-Mil plans, including rehearsals and lessons learned.
- Congress should create a training center for interagency and coalition operations. Most importantly, this center would train NSC and agency personnel on interagency planning.⁴²

⁴¹ Congress, Senate, *H.R. 2127, Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act of 2004*, 108th Cong., 2d sess., 2004, <<http://www.theorator.com/bills108/s2127.html>> [24 December 2004], 2.

⁴² Center for Strategic and International Studies, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, Phase 1 Report* (Washington, DC: March 2004), <http://www.csis.org/isp/0403_BGN.pdf> [20 December 2004], 63-66.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The U.S. interagency process is broken, but it is certainly not beyond repair. The following three steps, synthesized, in part, from the above efforts, and focused on planning would greatly enhance the U.S. capability to focus national power into coordinated policy to meet national security interests:

- First and most importantly, the President, via the NSC, should direct specific interagency guidance that builds on PDD-56. PDD-56 had important features, but it was only a start. The current administration needs to create an NSPD that forces interagency structure and processes.
 - Structure: The national level interagency effort suffers because there is no *unity of command*. A new NSPD must explicitly state that the President is ultimately responsible for interagency cooperation, and that the NSC structure is *his* tool to enforce it to meet *his* national security policy. Specifically, to re-align the NSC to its legislated functions, the National Security Advisor should focus on advising the President, while the Deputy National Security Advisor coordinates among involved government agencies.

The Deputy National Security Advisor, in turn, should organize the Deputies Committee, whose political appointees must be held *personally accountable* for their respective agencies' participation in the interagency process and execution of a *national plan*. Any NSC committee below the deputy secretary-level would not have enough political influence in Washington to force adequate interagency coordination. The NSPD must be clear that this committee is accountable to the President, not individual agencies.

- Processes: In addition, a new NSPD must, as PDD-56 started, direct extensive, detailed national strategic planning. Again, PDD-56 was only a start because it solely addressed complex contingency operations. Strategic interagency planning must cover the entire spectrum of operations. The new NSPD should direct national-level, strategic Pol-Mil planning for “on the shelf” or deliberate plans, as well as crisis operations. Further, the NSC-led interagency team must complete these plans *before* the military (and all other agencies) begin their individual departmental planning. This would ensure, at a fundamental level, *unity of effort*. This planning hierarchy would force increased departmental interest in developing useful “capstone” Pol-Mil plans because departmental planning (in particular DoD’s) would emanate *after* and *from* the broader national plan. The Pol-Mil planning process would then feed DoD’s Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan, which is the Chairman, JCS, official tasking to the Combatant Commanders directing deliberate planning. Currently, the Combatant Commanders, as part of their planning process, prepare an Annex V, which outlines their interagency requirements. Unfortunately, Annex V begins the interagency effort at the theater level, rather than at the national level. Thus, Annex V can be incomplete, uncoordinated, or simply unenforceable.
- A second recommendation is NSC-mandated interagency leveraging of DoD’s robust infrastructure. The Bush administration deferred nearly all aspects of the Iraq operation to DoD for a reason; it is vastly more prepared to plan, deploy, and operate overseas than any other agency. However, DoD does not have the expertise to project the non-military dimensions of national power without close cooperation of other U.S. government agencies.

National-level planners from all agencies would benefit from DoD's planning expertise and tools. A mechanism similar to or patterned after DoD's Joint Operations Planning and Execution System (JOPES) would be an excellent starting point for national level planning. Obviously, this would begin at a very rudimentary level, much like the Pol-Mil plans were in the 1990s, but over time, it would evolve. Planning is imbedded in DoD's culture, and the rest of the national government could benefit from decades of military planning experience.

- A third recommendation lies within the culture of DoD. While DoD dwarfs all other agencies in resources, its leaders must learn to value what the rest of the government can provide. The centralized, "give us a mission and leave us alone" mentality of the Pentagon leadership must end. DoD must eliminate using operational security as justification for exclusion of outside agencies. There are certainly ways to protect sensitive information without eliminating the inclusion of non-DoD expertise. It has been proven; DoD cannot alone appropriately project a successful national strategy that balances all dimensions of national power. Ideally, as stated, the other agencies should benefit from DoD's huge infrastructure, but they still must bring their unique expertise and experience necessary to meet the complex challenges of today's world. A potential peacetime method to help encourage this cultural change might be a DoD-led interagency planning training program for non-DoD agencies. This would not only educate the interagency community, but would forge individual and organizational interagency relationships under non-crisis conditions. Without a doubt, cultural change is slow and difficult, but strong leadership committed to integrating DoD into the interagency arena would pay tremendous dividends.

The task of national-level interagency coordination and planning is formidable, but not impossible, and there are examples of recent success. For instance, the Department of Homeland Security, under the direction of a Homeland Security Presidential Directive (the parallel directive of an NSPD), published the *National Response Plan* in December 2004. This plan establishes a single, comprehensive framework for managing domestic incidents. The utility and ultimate success of this plan remains to be seen, but the fact that all 32 national agency leaders, including the Secretaries of Commerce, Defense, Homeland Security, and State, worked together, developed, and signed a single, integrated plan proves that the national government agencies can accomplish the monumental task of interagency coordination.⁴³

CONCLUSION

The tremendous diplomatic, informational, military, and economic power of the United States is unquestioned, but a lack of national coordination and planning leaves it unfocused. Our national leaders must stop expecting seamless interagency coordination “in the field” despite their inability to coordinate in Washington. National-level interagency policy guidance is long overdue, and the National Security Council should assume its congressionally-directed integration and advisory roles by championing a new presidential directive that builds on the foundations of PDD-56. With a new directive that forces national-level interagency plans prior to operations, interagency unity of effort would be within reach.

⁴³ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *National Response Plan* (Washington, DC: December 2004) <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/editorial/editorial_0566.xml> [7 February 2005], i-viii.

Further, agencies must overcome the bureaucratic obstacles between them. Regardless of the ultimate outcome, U.S. leaders must learn from the mistakes in Iraq. DoD should never again be the lone participant in a major operation. Despite its incredible capabilities, the military cannot effectively operate alone in such a complex environment. To meet the ever-increasing challenges to U.S. national security, leaders must fully employ the entire scope of government expertise—wherever it may reside. Only then can Americans confidently expend precious blood and treasure in the name of national security.

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